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Differentiation as a Persuasive Strategy in Advertising Discourse

The principles of persuasive communication in mass media have recently become a popular subject of interdisciplinary research. Persuasive practices are approached now by a wide range of humanities: psychology, sociology, semiotics, linguistics, media studies, anthropology, philosophy, art-criticism, and others.

Obviously, advertising discourse is a discourse of persuasive communication. It has much in common with the discourses of politics, public relations, psychotherapeutics, barrister practice, education, upbringing, and some others. Linguistic and other semiotic instruments are used in these discourses to persuade, convince, tempt, and manipulate the audience or recipient (there are many interesting recent studies in language power and communicative strategies, e.g., Bergsdorf 1978, Kiseleva 1978, Bolinger 1980, Lakoff, G./Johnson 1980, Petrov 1987, Gorodetsky 1989, Lakoff, R. 1990, Larson 1992, Dotsenko 1997, Pocheptsov 1998, Kara-Murza 2000, Issers 2002). Many researchers consider mass media advertising as the most dominant and effective form of persuasion in contemporary culture.

Traditionally, linguistics focused on verbal advertising language and on various tools of speech influence employed in advertising messages (see for instance, Leech 1966, Roemer 1968, Dyer 1982, Geis 1982, Vestergaard/Schroeder 1985, Tanaka 1999). Actually, advertising messages are complex entities consisting of text proper, layout, print, colour, sound, and picture in various combinations depending on selected media and creative tactics. The interconnection of these components and their cumulative effect is examined in such semiotic studies of the advertising language (Barthes 1964, Barthes 1970, Eco 1968, Hecker/Stewart 1988, Pirogova/Parshin 2000, Morozova 2002, and others). The noteworthy approaches to advertising language occurred also within the psychological and communication studies of mass media (Leiss/Kline/Jhally 1986, Dontsov/Zasursky/Matvejeva/Podolsky 2002, and others).

Thus, despite the low respect which modern advertisements are accorded in the intellectual world, the investigation of advertising language has become a prominent topic in various liberal arts. Perhaps, therefore, the term "advertising language" has no universally accepted meaning.

In this article, the language of advertising is considered as a set of persuasive strategies and corresponding communicative means which persuaders employ to communicate with the target audience and to promote the product, service, candidate, idea, etc. The arrangement of these strategies and means is determined by pragmatic and communicative goals of the advertising campaign.

1. Persuasive campaign and persuasive strategies

For many years, linguistic and semiotic studies of advertising focused primarily on the "single-shot" perspective of persuasion. Researchers underestimated the impact of well-co-ordinated multiple messages in the marketing communication (or promotion) campaign. According to modern marketing theory, marketing communications constitute only one of the four main components (often called "4 Ps") of what is known as "marketing mix" that helps to sell the brand, namely:

- 1) **product**, its quality, benefits, outward appearance, and other properties;
- 2) market **price**;
- 3) **place** of distribution and sale;
- 4) **promotion** (in other words – marketing communications).

Marketing communications embrace various forms of informational interaction between the persuader and the target audience that serve promotional goals. They may be social-oriented or one-to-one communication, direct or mass media-assisted, ultimate-consumer or trade-agent-approached, business-to-consumer or business-to-business, planned or incidental communications. Apart from mass media and outdoor advertising, marketing communications include brand identification messages (names, trade marks, package messages, etc.), sales promotions, direct marketing and direct response messages, point-of-sale communications, personal selling, public relations, cor-

porate image signs, product placement communication, event marketing communication, and others.

The necessity of strong interconnection of all communications used in the promotion campaign underlies the conception called since the 1990s **integrated marketing communications**.

Evidently, not marketing communications, as a whole, but advertising, in particular, is a **campaign of persuasion**; and a campaign is not just a series of messages. Campaigns differ from spontaneously combined messages about the same product in three major ways (as noted by Larson 1992, p. 283). "They:

- 1) systematically create "positions" in the audience's mind for the product, candidate, or idea;
- 2) are intentionally designed to develop over time. In other words, campaigns are composed of stages for getting the audience's attention, preparing the audience for action, and finally, for calling the audience to action;
- 3) dramatise the product, candidate, idea, or ideology for the audience, inviting receivers to participate in real or symbolic ways with the campaign and its goal".

The impact of an advertising message as such depends on three main factors:

- the quality of the advertising message (in terms of its attractiveness, readability, memorability, and selling power);
- the quality of media planning (in terms of gross rating point and some others);
- the proper correlation between the advertising message and other components of marketing communications.

In this article we consider only the first and the last factors.

The basic term of this article is **persuasion**. It is used as a generic term that refers to rationally-based conviction as well as emotionally-based temptation, speech influence as well as non-verbal influence, and admonishing as well as suggestion. The term "persuasion" is convenient because it allows the avoidance of (when undesirable) emphasising the means or character of

influence that can be used in advertising and marketing communications. Incidentally, the term "persuasion" has no universally accepted equivalent in Russian linguistic terminology. Perhaps the closest meaning is rendered in Russian by the phrase "коммуникативное воздействие" ('communicative influence').

Thus, persuasion is a communicative influence. The term means that the persuader deliberately influences the recipient (or the audience) with communicative means in order to modify his or her knowledge (cognitive level influence), attitudes (affective level influence), or/and intention (conative level influence) so that these changes would be profitable or at least favourable for the persuader.

Persuasive strategies in marketing communications are methods of selecting, arranging, and presenting information about the product that serve pragmatic and communicative goals (or tasks) of the promotion campaign.

Actually, there are two kinds of communicative tasks to be solved within a successful message, namely, basic and supplementary. In order to solve basic tasks, the persuader needs to solve supplementary ones as well; otherwise the act of communication fails.

The basic tasks of marketing communications are those of positioning the product and offering some benefit for the target audience. Campaign communications must establish a certain "position" of the promoted brand in the market – "niche" or "creneau" in the audience's minds (in terms of Ries/Trout 1986). It results in a "top of mind awareness" and in a distinctive product image. A well-positioned brand becomes distinct from other brands, communicates positive product image, holds the target audience's attention, and stimulates consumer behaviour.

So the main positioning communicative goals are to distinguish the brand among vying products (or to approximate it to the fixed competitive brand – "me-too"-strategy), to formulate its sales points, to associate it with the needs and desires of the target audience, to emphasise its real or symbolic advantages or benefits, and thus, to prepare the consumer for the expected

action (buying or trying a product). Persuaders may position their product as (claimed by Ries/Trout):

- being the first offered product in a given category;
- being the best product in a given category;
- being the least expensive product in a given category;
- being the most expensive product in a given category;
- being the product as opposed to the prevalent tendency in a given category (the so called “we’re not” positioning);
- being the product positioned by gender (appealing mainly to a specific sex);
- being the product positioned by age (appealing mainly to a specific generation);
- being the product positioned by benefit (identifying the unique features of the product that promise a convincing benefit aimed at the target market), etc.

Obviously, the communicative tasks dealing with positioning are connected with various positioning strategies that help to create a favourable image of the product in the audience's minds. Let us call the corresponding strategies **product-positioning strategies**. It may be presumed that they include:

- strategies of identification and differentiation (distinction);
- value- and benefit-oriented strategies;
- product evaluation strategies,

and probably some others.

The supplementary tasks of communication deal with the rhetoric of the message and with the peculiarities of the recipient and channel. It is not so easy to overcome unfavourable conditions in which advertising communication proceeds.

It is well known that the perception, interpretation, and evaluation of advertising messages by receivers differ from the same operations with other kinds of messages. The persuader has to somehow overcome the receiver's

opposition, namely, the audience's inattention, their tendency to shun advertising, their prejudices, and their lack of interest and trust.

Among other unfavourable conditions, those pertaining to the communicative channel should be mentioned. Advertising is an indirect socially targeted communication accompanied by the competitors' messages. The persuader needs to break the product-positioning message "through the clutter".

So, the supplementary tasks are the tasks of intensification of the message itself. Let us call the corresponding strategies **message-improving strategies**. Among them are:

- target-interaction strategies (enable to arrange the communicative means with speech and life-style patterns and desires of the receivers);
- attention-catching strategies (e.g., eye-stoppers and/or ear-stoppers on the tactical level);
- mnemonic strategies (enable to increase the memorability of the message or its part);
- readability-improving strategies;
- argumentation strategies (enable to strengthen the probability of the statements);
- action-provoking strategies;
- cross-reference strategies (help to associate messages with the brand and to create the communicative campaign integrity).

All of these strategies are used to attract attention to the message, to make it more interesting for the target audience, to increase its readability, persuasiveness, memorability, and inspirability, and thereby to increase its selling power.

As a rule to make product ads successful, the persuader needs to use both kinds of strategies: product-positioning and message-improving.

Let us examine now the "Maybelline" cosmetics slogan:

*"May be she's born with it
May be it's Maybelline".*

The brand is positioned as ensuring a naturally looking make-up and beauty for women. The main product values are emphasised in the slogan. So, the persuader used a value-oriented strategy. This strategy was assisted on a tactical linguistic level with the remark-like phrase communicating naturally looking attractive appearance of a woman though neither the word “*naturally*” nor its synonyms are used. This is covert communication. The slogan communicates close attention to a woman and doubt: does she use make-up or not. The slogan implies also that “Maybelline” perhaps differs from competitive brands because of the emphasised property.

To attach this value to the brand in consumers' minds the persuader created a memorable paronym “*Maybelline*” – “*may be*”. The phonetic repetitions, rhythmical pattern, and grammatical parallelism instill the brand name and the message in the audience's memory. These are the tactical means of mnemonic strategy used by persuader.

Incidentally, “Maybelline” is positioned otherwise in Russia. The Russian slogan associates the brand with such values as beauty of a woman and admiration of people. Naturally looking make-up is neither mentioned nor implied. Thus, the Russian-speaking persuader used value-oriented strategy although the selected values partly differ.

“Все в восторге от тебя, а ты – от Мейбеллин.”	(‘Everybody is delighted with you and you are – with Maybelline’.)
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Distinguishing features can also be noticed in the use of mnemonic strategy. There are no powerful linguistic means (such as alliteration, paronymy, or rhyme, for instance) in the Russian slogan that can assist in remembering the brand name. The slightly expressed rhythm is the only mnemonic mean manifested in the slogan.

Let us move on to the subject mentioned in the headline as the ultimate subject of the article.

2. **Strategies of differentiation in marketing communications discourse**

2.1 Strategies of differentiation and tactical linguistic means

Strategies of differentiation in marketing communications are those that enable the development, maintenance, and/or intensification of the distinctive features or uniqueness of the brand image in the consumers' minds.

On the tactical level, persuaders can use various communicative means. The specialised linguistic means are:

- antonyms and quasi-antonyms;
- some words and phrases with contrastive meaning (best, unique, only, revolutionary, exceptional, extraordinary, new, etc.);
- explicit or implicit contrasts/oppositions (including contrast phrases);
- negative sentences and various negations (including negative particles and prefixes);
- various types of comparisons, and comparative or superlative degrees of adjectives;
- language paradox (particularly paradoxical epithet, paradoxical pun, paradoxical neologism, and paradoxical hyperbole);
- false categorisation (false nomination);
- contrastive actual division of the sentence (contrastive stress, and contrastive theme);
- contrastive stylistics of the message;

and other means.

Various unspecialised linguistic means can also be used to convey and/or to strengthen differentiation (metaphor, analogy, and hyperbole are among them). Their contrastive or non-contrastive meaning depends on context. The use of metaphor as a means of differentiation can be illustrated by the following example:

*“По снегу и грязи,
по лужам и пыли.
Вот так ботинок-
T-34!”*

*(‘Best in worst dirt
In mud and in snow.
Great combat boot
T-34!’)*

The legendary Russian tank image (“T-34”) used in the boots' advertisement creates the impression of the best shoes' cross-country features. The brand name “T-34” introduces a military metaphor which helps to distinguish the brand as the best among competitive products and also matches the style of men's clothing advertising. The metaphor is also used in this case as a form of proof: “T-34” are the most practicable boots, because they are not ordinary boots: They are “tank boots”.

In this connection, it is necessary to draw attention to the importance of common-sense inference in communication. Recent works in pragmatics, linguistics, semiotics, and psychology (for instance, Grice 1975, Geis 1982, Paducheva 1985, Dotsenko 1997, Tanaka 1999, Borisova/Martem'yanov 1999, and Pirogova 2000) show that inferential communication is very diverse and can be used to persuade and manipulate others. For Grice (1975), inferential communication is achieved by the use of a ‘Co-operative Principle’ together with maxims of conversation (quantity, quality, relevance, and manner maxims).

For instance, in the following text, the persuader mainly employed the strategy of differentiation that is based on the combination of explicit oppositions and implicit statements. The persuader intends to communicate that the promoted car is the extraordinary brand:

The Chrysler Viper: No room for more than two. No room for any luggage. No side windows. No roof. No exterior doorhandles. No make-up mirror. No colours but red. And we have the nerve to ask 215 grand for it.

The advertisers assume a certain attitude of the audience towards a car (a car must be a practical vehicle) as the norm, without explicitly saying so. They imply (maxim of relevance) that a car without such attributes such as a luggage room, a roof, etc. is of little avail. As the persuader takes this statement as a basis, he or she emphasises the opposition of the car called “Viper” to

the other car brands via a series of negative utterances. Lexical repetitions of pronoun (“no ... no ... no ...”), grammatical parallelism relations (“no+noun”), and ironical statement (“and we have the nerve to ...”) intensify the opposition. The so called “we’re not” positioning strategy used in this case and supported by the above mentioned linguistic means helps to communicate covertly that “Viper” is an exception to the rule. It does not need to be practical, because it is not an ordinary vehicle but an article of luxury.

2.2 Strategies of differentiation and its information vehicles

The distinctive features of a brand image can be created and/or emphasised within various stages of marketing communication activity and so can be conveyed by various information vehicles. The following are some of those stages: working out brand attributes; working out a brand's outward appearance (its shape, colour, material, package, etc.); working out a brand name, a trade mark, and other identity signs; determining a price and a place of sales; determining a product category and/or a subcategory for brand positioning; determining a basic verbal statement (proposition) of a promotion message; determining a basic nonverbal statement (illustration and/or jingle) of a promotion message, and other stages of marketing decisions. It is necessary to emphasise that not only advertisements, commercials, direct mails, and brand names are vehicles of information but product attributes, brand outward appearance, price, and place, are also information vehicles.

Accordingly, we can suggest an **information vehicle-based taxonomy of differentiation strategies**: brand-attributes differentiation strategy, brand outward appearance differentiation strategy, naming and trade mark differentiation strategies, categorisation-based differentiation strategy, advertising statement differentiation strategy, price differentiation strategy, point-of-sale differentiation strategy, sales promotion differentiation strategy, etc.

For example, the wine brand “J.P. Chenet” perceptibly differs from other brands: Its bottle has an unusual twisted neck. The persuader employed the brand outward appearance differentiation strategy. The semiotic means arranged on the tactical level is the shape of a bottleneck. The persuader created a privative opposition within the category “twisted vs. non-twisted neck”. The twisted neck is a marked term opposed against the ordinary

shaped neck (an unmarked term). A trade mark differentiation strategy is used to maintain the distinctive features of the popular Russian internet corporation "Яндекс". The brand name has a paradoxical combination of Cyrillic and Latin letters (language play is chosen on the tactical level). In another example, a part of speech with lack of nominative function is chosen to sustain the brand name uniqueness of the perfume called "So?".

As a matter of fact, there are composed and well-co-ordinated decisions within a promotion campaign that work most persuasively. They cause the strong cumulative effect.

For instance, in the shampoo category, the brand "Nisoral" occupies a prominent position. It is opposed to the rest of the brands as the most effective remedy that rids consumers of dandruff for a long time. To convey this message to the audience, the persuader created the slogan (the basic verbal statement) "*Надолго избавит от перхоти*" ('*Will save you from dandruff for long*'). However, the most powerful tool was used while determining a product category. "Nisoral" is not called shampoo but "*medicine for dandruff*". This combination of words is used in all messages: on the label, in advertisements and commercials, etc. By the way, these are the ultimate shampoo ads and commercials that explain why dandruff emerges and clearly express medical stylistics. Moreover, the price and points of sale decisions maintain and strengthen this proposition: "Nisoral" is supposed to be the most expensive shampoo (it is ten times as expensive in comparison with "Head & Shoulders" in the Russian marketplace), and it is only on sale in pharmacies (never in shops). Thus, "Nisoral" is the ultimate dandruff shampoo positioned as a medicine in the Russian marketplace. The persuader employed a strong combination of communicative means in persuasive campaign: false categorisation supported by the unusual word combination, scientific-looking stylistics of the messages, verbal and non-verbal repetitions, point-of-sale and price communications, and others.

2.3 Strategies of differentiation and truth-value-based taxonomy of statements

In a persuasive message, it is not only significant what is said but also how it is said, that is, a rhetorical tool of information presentation plays an impor-

tant role. Among the most widely used rhetorical tools to create differentiation is that of opposition, contrast. A differentiation strategy used in a message opposes the promoted brand against the others within the product category. The consequence is that some kind of semantic opposition statement arises. There may be true, false, and unverifiable statements caused by differentiation strategy. So, we can suggest the **truth-value-based taxonomy** of statements.

True opposition statements are those claims based on real characteristics of the product that distinguish the latter from all (or from the majority of) representatives of the same product category. All of the other claims are false or unverifiable statements.

False opposition statements are those claims based on real characteristics of the product that are not distinctive in the product category.

Unverifiable opposition statements are the following claims:

- they are based on symbolic (imaginary) characteristics of the product; and/or
- their plane of expression makes verification contrary to common sense or even impossible.

Here is an example of a true opposition statement – the advertisement of a “Samsung” TV set with a bioceramic cover; its qualities are not repeated by competitors. The specific quality named is associated with the subcategory name “Биотелевизор” (‘Bio TV’) and the slogan “*Живое тянется к био*” (‘Life is bio-centred’). We do not consider the question if this bioceramic cover brings real benefit to consumers. What is important here is that this cover is a truly unique advantage.

More often major benefit-giving qualities of the product are not unique in the marketplace. At the present level of industrial standardisation, goods with exceptionally unique characteristics are rare in the marketplace. But even in this case, persuaders can create opposition statements. Here we do not mean candidly fake advertising claims: We mean such advertising approaches when an opposition statement is constructed involving only language means even if no unique quality is built in the product. In some cases,

true opposition statements are based on favourably emphasised product qualities, which do not differentiate the item from all category representatives, but from the majority of them. For example:

"Ariel. Отстирает даже то, что другим не под силу". ('Ariel. It washes clean what others can't'. All others can't or some others can't? – it is not known.)

The example of false opposition statement is the "Schlitz" beer slogan:

"Our bottles are washed with live steam!"

This is a well-known slogan from a prominent "Schlitz" beer advertising campaign, which ensured the success of this brand. The slogan makes a claim about a standard process of beer bottle sterilisation. But the persuader intends to make the impression that only "Schlitz" beer bottles undergo this unusual sterilisation process. The paradoxical phrases *"washed with steam"*, *"live steam"* and the contrastive actual division of the exclamatory sentence (our bottles vs. other bottles) convey the impression of the brand's uniqueness. The inference caused by these means is: "The Schlitz beer differs from the other brands", and this is a false inference.

The cases of unverifiable statement creation appear even more interesting. They are often built upon emphasised imaginary features of the product. Here is an example of such a skilful approach from Reeves "Reality in Advertising" (1961):

"Break hot cigarettes habit with Kools"

This "Kool" cigarette advertisement (*Kool* and *cool* are homophones, 'cool' – between warm and cold or pleasant, fine) is centred on the brand name which contradicts standard associations with a lit cigarette (lit cigarette – hot cigarette). It is only a play on words (these cigarettes have neither a menthol nor a mint taste). Nevertheless, this advertising claim conveys an opposition of brands. The effect is achieved by language means only: No real unique feature is implied here.

The following example has much in common with the former one: *"El Gusto. Самый горячий кофе!" ('El Gusto. The hottest coffee!')*. Evidently the oppositions "hot vs. cool cigarettes" and "very hot vs. not so hot coffee

brands” are imaginary and contrary to common sense. Thus, they are unverifiable opposition statements. Nevertheless, they are persuasive.

False and unverifiable statements as well as true ones are based on contrast between the advertised item and the competitive product. However, if the power of a true statement is implied both in the choice of information about the brand and the way it is presented, false and unverifiable statements can only be measured by the information presentation devices utilised. This is how they acquire a true statement mask. To create a false and unverifiable statement does not mean to deceive: It means to present information about the item in such a way that the consumers perceive this item as unique. Thus, rhetorical tools of contrast or opposition creation are very important in this case.

2.4 Rhetorical devices to create brand opposition statements

To create an opposition statement, persuaders can utilise three basic ways of presenting contrastive information:

2.4.1 Positive features substitute negative features

A statement is constructed “All (or many) products have feature X; our product has feature Y”; feature X is estimated as negative – either originally or in comparison with feature Y, whereas feature Y is viewed as generally positive. In other words, feature Y is accentuated to weaken competitive brands’ features (without mentioning brand names as a rule). For example:

“Найдите съеденные 3,5 см!” (*Find the bitten 3.5 centimetres!*)
Samsung World Best Plus TV set advertisement.)

This slogan figuratively delivers the brand's difference from its competitors. Body copy and illustrations sustain the main advertising claim and provide arguments for it: “*Will you buy this apple?*” – (an illustration of an apple bitten from both sides) – “*Or will you buy this one?*” – (an illustration of a perfectly round apple) – “*No matter how good your TV set is, it has a visible disadvantage. It does not show the whole of the picture.*”

In this example, we can see false analogy mechanism. An ordinary TV set is equated to a bitten apple, an apple that lost its trade looks. This device declares ordinary TV sets as defective or having lost their trade looks after Samsung World Best Plus appeared in the marketplace. The metaphor “*bitten centimetres*” fortifies the impression.

Let us examine the following example more attentively:

“*M&M's. Молочный шоколад. Тает во рту, а не в руках*”.

(*‘M&M's. Milk chocolate that melts in your mouth not in your hand’.*)

This product is assigned to the ‘chocolate’ product category although it would be more correct to call this product ‘candies’. Artificial substitution of the product category (false categorisation) helps to achieve two aims simultaneously. First, it boosts the status of the brand (chocolate is subjectively evaluated as more expensive and prestigious sweetmeat than candies). Secondly, it helps to express the distinguishing feature of the brand: It is real chocolate and not just candy that melts in your hands. Thus, the product's shift to a different category enabled the persuader to contrast this brand to all other brands.

2.4.2 Strengthening of positive features

A statement is constructed: “All (or many) goods have feature X, and our product has Superfeature X*”, and X* is evaluated as the supreme manifestation of feature X. For instance:

“*Ariel. Не просто чисто – безупречно чисто*”. (*‘Ariel clean – super clean’; washing powder.*)

“*Новый Omo Intelligent. Распознает и отстирывает пятна. Без следа*”. (*‘New Omo Intelligent. Identifies and eliminates spots. Without a trace’.*)

“*Есть мебель, которую покупают для дома, есть мебель, для которой покупают дома*”. (*‘There are houses you buy furniture for. There is furniture you buy houses for.’ Furniture showroom “Venezia”.*)

2.4.3 Marked element in the product category

A statement is constructed: "All products have standard features X; our product has these features and a specific feature Y", when the consumer does not expect that feature Y can be used to advertise products from this category. This tool is different from the previous ones, because it implies no competitive product quality underestimation and no disadvantage emphasis, but the advertised item itself is made special and more noticeable in the category.

"It floats." (The Ivory soap slogan) A soap rich in bubbles is advertised.

"Viper. Осторожно, ядовита!" (*"Viper. Caution: Viperous!"* Chrysler Viper sports auto advertisement.)

The slogan plays around the model name which means 'reptile, venomous snake'. The comparison with a snake agrees with a sports car image: curved silhouette, high speed – dangerous thing! At the same time, this attribute "*viperous*" creates the impression of its notability and uniqueness.

"Swatch. The others just watch." (Swatch watch advertising.)

The last slogan is difficult to translate from English as it is centred on the brand name and a polysemantic word *watch* ("time measuring device" or "keeping one's eyes on an item"). This is a pun with two communicated meanings: 'This is the only Swatch watch. The others are only time measuring devices', and 'This is the Swatch watch. The others can only keep their eyes on this item'.

Considered in terms of semiotic types of oppositions, the brand opposition statements in ads can be classified on privative, gradual, and equipollent. The most widespread oppositions are binary (the A and C types of statements) and gradual (the B type) ones. Equipollent oppositions (may occur in the A and C type of statements) are rare in advertising and promotion messages though this type of correlation is usual within product category structures. Perhaps persuaders tend to convert equipollent oppositions of brands into binary or gradual ones while creating an advertising message.

To sum up my ideas, I would like to highlight the following: A differentiation strategy in terms of information delivery is centred on product uniqueness (compared to all or some major competitors). This uniqueness may be real (true opposition statements) or imaginary (false or unverifiable opposition statements). It is necessary to claim the uniqueness of the product in such a way that it highlights its unusual character and makes the consumer take a new fresh look at the product. At the same time, this statement not only presents a certain product in a new light but it also changes the usual consumers' view of the product category in general.

For example, before the appearance of anti-cavity chewing gums, the consumer never expected to get information about this quality of a gum; before the claim to break hot cigarettes habit, no consumers thought about cigarettes temperature; before "M&M's", no one supposed that chocolate would not melt in your hands after a long time.

All this is unusual information for consumers. Something that seems unusual, interesting, or surprising is well memorised. In cognitive psychology, it is stated that the process of information input into memory has random character (see for instance, Solso 1998). Memory saves primarily those impressions that have high information value or empathy. Correlation between emphasis and memorability was also stated in experiments conducted by W. Chafe ("The recall and verbalization of past experience", see Chafe 1977). It is apparent that information that transforms the knowledge about a product category is perceived as meaningful and empathic. So, brand opposition statements make the consumer review his or her conventional ideas not only of this particular product but also of the product category in general. This is the reason for its high memorability.

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In conclusion, I would like to emphasise the following. The language of advertising is not the total combination of lexemes, phrases, or linguistic patterns often used in advertising discourse. Advertising communication can proceed and can be recognised as persuasive by the recipient even without them. In my opinion, the language of advertising should be described as a set of persuasive strategies and corresponding communicative means which

persuaders employ to communicate with the target audience and to promote the product (or service, candidate, idea, etc.). Strategies of differentiation are very noteworthy communicative strategies that are characteristic to marketing communication (and particularly to advertising) discourse. The study of communicative strategies employed in discourses of persuasion provides a stimulating approach to understanding the human mind and behaviour.

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